

## ENERGY STREAMLINING TASK FORCE PROJECT SUMMARY

**Name:** Federal Leasing in Sierra & Otero Counties, New Mexico

EP-1

**Entity proposing project:** Harvey E. Yates Company (HEYCO); Burlington Resources Oil & Gas Company, LP (Domestic Petroleum Council submitted comment)

**Category of project:** Exploration & Production

**Brief description of project:** ESA concerns about Aplomado Falcon (threatened & endangered) prompted need for amendment to the existing Resource Management Plan for exploratory unit called the Bennett Ranch Unit

**Agencies that must be consulted and agencies from which approval is needed:**

**Federal:** Bureau of Land Management (Las Cruces Field Office, NM)

**Project Timeline:**

Environmental Assessment for White Sands Resource Area – completed 1981

Resource Area Management Plan (RMP) for White Sands Resource Area – completed 1986

Federal Exploratory Unit in Otero County formed – 1996

Initial Exploratory Well Drilled – August 3, 1997

Notice of Intent to Amend RMP & Publish EIS – October 15, 1998 (deferred all leasing until completion of RMP Amendment (RMPA))

Draft RMPA (DRMPA) – published October 2000 (shut down leasing in the 2 counties for at least 3 years; contains “onerous, restrictive stipulations”)

Latest extension of comment period for DRMPA – ended June 22, 2001

Final RMP due – December 2001

**Reason for bringing project to the task force’s attention:** would like prompt finalization of RMPA & prompt approval of permitting process improvements as part of BLM’s permitting benchmarking project